

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04

TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01

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R 291809Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6414

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USDEL MTN GENEVA

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DEPARTMENT PASS STR AND AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, MTN, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARD MTN

REFS: A) STATE 299813; B) PARIS 29674; C) PARIS 32589;
D) MTN GENEVA 9015; E) MTN GENEVA 8869; F) PARIS A-794,
NOVEMBER 23, 1973

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES FRENCH WILL CONTINUE TO
INSIST ON STRICT INTERPRETATION OF EC NEGOTIATING
MANDATE UNTIL IT BECOMES CLEAR TO THEM THAT ECONOMIC
RECOVERY IS WELL UNDER WAY IN INDUSTRIALIZED CONTRIES
AND U.S. CONGRESS IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT A MORE LIBERAL
TRADE REGIME. FRENCH ACCEPT GOAL OF COMPLETING MTN BY
END OF 1977 AS PER RAMBOUILLET DECLARATION BUT THIS
UNLIKELY TO AFFECT FRENCH TACTICS UNTIL EARLY 1977.
FRENCH REMAIN SUSPICIOUS OF U.S. MOTIVES RE EC COMMON

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AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND WE SEE NO POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE

IN FRENCH POSITION ON PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS AT GENEVA.
END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SKEPTICAL ABOUT VALUE OF NEW ROUND OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AND ECONOMIC RECESSION REINFORCED THIS VIEW. GOF OFFICIALS WELCOMED U.S. IDEA OF A MINI-PACKAGE BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT IF SUCH A CONCLUSION WERE POSSIBLE (WHICH THEY DOUBTED) IT WOULD BE THE END OF THIS ROUND. THEY ALSO GAVE A HIGHER PRIORITY TO INTERNATIONAL MONETARY REFORM, AND THE TOKYO DECLARATION BEARS WITNESS TO THIS. NEVERTHELESS, GOF DECIDED TO ACCEPT THE NEW TRADE LIBERALIZATION EFFORT, PRESUMABLY INTER ALIA ON ASSUMPTION THAT FRANCE COULD GAIN MORE ON EXPORT SIDE THAN IT WOULD SUFFER IN IMPORT LIBERALIZATION.

3. ON AGRICULTURE, EMBASSY DOES NOT SEE ANY SHIFT IN FRENCH STRATEGY WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO TAKE THE TOUGHEST POSITION IN DEFENSE OF CAP. AS EMBASSY STATED IN NOVEMBER, 1973 (A-794) QUOTE THERE ARE ALMOST NO ASPECTS OF THE CAP ON WHICH THE FRENCH MIGHT EVENTUALLY SHOW FLEXIBILITY UNQUOTE. LIBERALIZATION OF TRADE IN AGRICULTURE IS NOT A FRENCH OBJECTIVE. THEY SEEK EXPANSION OF TRADE WITH "STABILITY," I.E., THROUGH MARKET ORGANIZATION. THE FRENCH SAW OUR APPROACH TO GRAIN RESERVES THROUGH SPECIAL TALKS IN LONDON AS UNREALISTIC BECAUSE WE WERE TRYING TO SEPARATE RESERVES AND PRICES AND BECAUSE WE SEEMED TO THEM TO BE MAKING AN END RUN PAST GENEVA. EVERY TIME A SENIOR U.S. ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL ADDRESSES AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE ATTACKING THE CAP, FRENCH SEE THIS AS A CONFIRMATION OF THEIR SUSPICIONS WITH RESPECT TO OUR "REAL" MOTIVES AT THE MTN. THE FRENCH BELIEVE RAMBOUILLET SUPPORTED THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE TOKYO DECLARATION THAT AGRICULTURE IS "SPECIAL." CONSEQUENTLY, FRENCH POSITIONS ON AGRICULTURE HAVE BEEN AND ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN BASICALLY DEFENSIVE. PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC, FORMERLY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, SEES GOF POLICY ON CAP IN MTN IN STRICTLY POLITICAL TERMS. HE IS ESPECIALLY CONSCIOUS OF THE NARROW-MARGIN OF GISCARD'S ELECTORAL VICTORY AND SEES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FARM VOTE AS CRUCIAL TO FRENCH POLITICAL STABILITY.

4. ON RAMBOUILLET, FRENCH COMMITTED TO GOAL OF COMPLETING MTN BY END OF 1977. WE ARE SURE THEY DO NOT SEE ANY INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THEIR BEHAVIOR AT GENEVA AND THIS OBJECTIVE. IF THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES FRENCH MADE MORE DETAILED COMMITMENT, ESPECIALLY ON AGRICULTURE, EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT IT.

5. PROGRESS ON MONETARY REFORM, UNLESS OVERTURNED BY CONGRESS, SEEMS LIKELY TO REMOVE A POTENTIAL STICKING POINT FOR FRENCH IN MTN. THIS DOES NOT MEAN IT REMOVES OTHER STICKING POINTS, MERELY THAT FRENCH MAY NOT RAISE MONETARY-TRADE LINKAGE AT CRUCIAL MOMENT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. OBVIOUSLY WHAT HAPPENS IN THE NEXT TWELVE TO EIGHTEEN MONTHS WILL INFLUENCE THEIR CHOICE OF TACTICS.

6. EMBASSY TEL (REF C) REPORTS STATEMENT BY TRADE MINISTER NORBERT SEGARD ON FRENCH OBJECTIVES IN MTN. AMBASSADOR WALKER HAS MET RECENTLY WITH ALL THE KEY FRENCH POLICY-MAKING OFFICIALS AND MEMCONS PREPARED BY USDEL GENEVA SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON.
GAMMON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, AGRICULTURAL POLICIES, AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS33788
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750449-0142
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975128/aaaaagla.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 299813, 76 PARIS 29674, 76 PARIS 32589
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <10 JUL 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARD MTN
TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, FR, MTN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006